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E.O. 12958: DECL: 6/24/2017
TAGS: PGOV PREL MOPS IR IZ
SUBJECT: BASRAH'S NEW POLICE CHIEF CHALLENGES U.S.

CLASSIFIED BY: Louis L. Bono, Director, Basrah Regional Embassy Office, Department of State.

REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (C/NF) Summary. The newly appointed Basrah Chief of Police, Major General Jalil Khalaf Shueil, visited the director of the Basrah Regional Embassy Office June 24 and made an energetic appeal for U.S. troops to be sent in to replace British forces which are drawing down in preparation for Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC). The police chief said that Iranian intelligence agents are operating everywhere in Basrah, and Iranian illegals are flooding the city provisioned with fake Iraqi identity papers. He said as a consequence of Iranian subversion, an arms race is taking place among the Basrah militias, and predicted a civil war will break out. End summary.

¶2. (C/NF) Jalil, who has been on the job for about 10 days, said that the only way to stabilize Basrah in the near term is to bring in U.S. forces. A career military officer, Jalil praised the U.S. fighting spirit and lambasted the British military, which he contended lacks the resolve to take on the militias. The director said that there are no plans to deploy U.S. forces in Basrah, and that provincial control (PIC) may take place by September. Jalil replied: "Please tell the British that PIC at this point in time is a joke. PIC will put southern Iraq under the control of Iran. All will be lost," the police chief said. Jalil said he would need at least six months to "purge" the police force of militias and prepare it for the task of securing Basrah. He said in the meantime he will need support from the Iraqi Army (IA). He said there are plans to form a new 14th Division from elements of the 10th Division, but he emphasized that any IA units must be drawn not just from outside of Basrah, but from outside the region. The director noted that Jalil may not have six months to reform the police force and asked what would happen if PIC occurs in September. Jalil warned "Basrah would become like Amarra" then added "why not just give it to the Iranians now."

¶3. (C/NF) Jalil mocked British contentions that the presence of their troops in Basrah is the cause of the unrest and that their withdrawal would stabilize the city. "That is a fake idea, a stupid idea. Iran wants to control Basrah," he said. "It is the key to Iraq." He stated that Basrah is flush with Iranian intelligence officers, who control the political parties and the militias. He said the Gulf countries are very concerned about Iranian influence in Basrah and added that Kuwaiti operatives are also present, but they are fewer in number and influence. Basrah, he said, is turning into a war front. The police chief said that Iran is supplying sophisticated weapons to the Ja'ish al-Mahdi and that this is fueling an arms race with competing militias. He predicted that Basrah would erupt in "civil war"

between the militias if PIC occurs before the Iraqi security forces are ready. He challenged the U.S. to address this problem: "If you are not going to do anything about this, than what are you doing in Iraq."

¶4. (C) Biographic note: The following information was provided by British Army intelligence. In November 2006, then Brigadier General Jalil and four others were arrested on the orders of an administrative judge. The judge, working in conjunction with MNF and an FBI task force, charged Jalil with kidnapping, extortion, illegally providing arms to militias, dereliction of duty, and for gross abuse of military rank and office for disciplining subordinates who had arrested JAM members. One day after the arrest, Jalil was released on bond. Within twenty-four hours, two of the witnesses in the case were killed in broad daylight. Jalil was tried and convicted of corruption, for which he served one month in prison. Following his release, the MOD reinstated him, promoted him to Major General, and appointed him as the Director of the Detention Operations Committee.

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